

# Legislature Considering State Medi-Care Program

By VINCENT THOMAS, California Medical Association, 68th District Assemblyman, Hopes that California's medical care by utilization of all existing voluntary and insured medical care programs. The "basic medical care" system would include health care and related remedial or preventive services, but would exclude hospital care lasting more than 60 days, nursing home care more than 30, and care in rehabilitation center lasting more than 30 days.

The system of "extended health services" would include only inpatient care, including hospital care lasting more than 60 days, nursing home care of more than 30 days, or care in a rehabilitation center lasting more than an as yet unspecified number of days.

The BASIC system would be financed by an appropriation from the state treasury (the limit is still left blank in the bill), the federal participation would be used to offset the amount otherwise necessary. The extended services would be similarly financed, but the existing upper limit of \$380 per year per patient has been left in the bill. The fixing of the precise limits on appropria-

tions hinges on the amounts actually appropriated by Congress for the health care sections of the major Social Security Act bill which has new representatives in a compromise form which permits the utilization of existing health care systems, and is under consideration in the Senate. "Health care services" are defined in the broadcast possible terms. They include services of physicians and other licensed practitioners of the healing arts, care in any governmentally operated, or licensed medical facility, private duty nursing, laboratory and X-ray services, dentistry, prescriptions, eyeglasses, and many others. Eligible are persons receiving any kind of public assistance, families of children dependent on aid, and "medically indigent" persons not receiving public assistance, whose incomes and resources are found insufficient for both living and medical care.

Full freedom to select medical practitioners would be preserved, and eligible persons would be issued identification cards so they can receive care without red tape. WHAT MAKES this particular bill almost unique in our history of welfare legislation is that potent groups, ordinarily found on opposite sides of basic welfare issues, have united in its support. It's news when the Medical Association and the Institute of Social Welfare team up on behalf of a measure.

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